



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/821,169	04/09/2004	Dong-in Shin	Q80860	8396

23373 7590 03/20/2007
SUGHRUE MION, PLLC
2100 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, N.W.
SUITE 800
WASHINGTON, DC 20037

EXAMINER

TRAN, HANH VAN

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
----------	--------------

3637

SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE	MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
3 MONTHS	03/20/2007	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/821,169

Applicant(s)

SHIN ET AL.

Examiner

Hanh V. Tran

Art Unit

3637

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 05 February 2007.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-16 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 2/5/2007 has been entered.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

3. Claims 1-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by JP 2001-336872 to Oishi.

JP 2001-336872 to Oishi discloses a refrigerator comprising all the elements recited in the above listed claims including, such as shown in Figs 4, 6, & 8 and the previously attached marked-up copy of the examiner's interpretation of the claimed limitations, a body 1 provided with storage compartments, a door 7 hingedly coupled to the body 1, a door-handle assembly mounted to a front of the door 7 and comprising (a) a door handle formed with a bracket-accommodating portion and a first coupling portion adjacent to the bracket-accommodating portion (shown in Fig 4a); (b) a supporting

Art Unit: 3637

bracket (shown in Fig 4c) installed in the front of the door to be accommodated in the bracket-accommodating portion and having a second coupling portion locked to the first coupling portion by sliding the door handle, wherein the supporting bracket is formed with supporters at opposite ends thereof, and the door handle formed with a sliding guide supporting the supporters while sliding, wherein the first coupling portion and the second coupling portion are hook-locked to each other, wherein the door handle comprises a front cover 9; and a rear cover 5 detachably coupled with the front cover and formed with the bracket-accommodating portion, first coupling portion and the sliding guide, wherein a reinforcing cover 6 detachably connected onto the rear cover 5, wherein the reinforcing cover 6 is formed with a separation hole at a position corresponding to the first coupling portion of the rear cover 5, wherein the door has a plane, and the first coupling portion is locked to the second coupling portion by sliding the first coupling portion in a direction parallel to the plane, with the plane being defined as a the horizontal plane of the door.

4. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

5. Claims 1-3, 6, 9-11, and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by US 2004/0094560 to Gose et al.

Art Unit: 3637

Gose et al discloses a refrigerator comprising all the elements recited in the above listed claims including, such as shown in Figs 2 and 7, a body provided with storage compartments, a door 15 hingedly coupled to the body, a door-handle assembly mounted to a front of the door 15 and comprising (a) a door handle 65 formed with a bracket-accommodating portion and a first coupling portion 75 adjacent to the bracket-accommodating portion (shown in Fig 7); (b) a supporting bracket 70 installed in the front of the door to be accommodated in the bracket-accommodating portion and having a second coupling portion locked to the first coupling portion 75 by sliding the door handle 65, such as shown in Figs 8-9, wherein the supporting bracket 70 is formed with supporters 109-110 at opposite ends thereof, and the door handle formed with a sliding guide 160-161 supporting the supporters 109-110 while sliding, wherein the first coupling portion and the second coupling portion are hook-locked to each other, wherein the door has a plane, and the first coupling portion 75 is locked to the second coupling portion by sliding the first coupling portion in a direction parallel to the plane.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

6. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

7. The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

Art Unit: 3637

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

8. Claims 4-5, 7-8, 12-13, and 15-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gose in view of Oishi.

Gose et al discloses all the elements as discussed above except for the door handle comprising a front cover; and a rear cover detachably coupled with the front cover; wherein the rear cover comprises the bracket-accommodating portion, the first coupling portion, and a sliding guide, a reinforcing cover detachably connected onto the rear cover; wherein the reinforcing cover is formed with a separation hole at a position corresponding to the first coupling portion of the rear cover.

Oishi teaches the idea of providing a door handle comprising a front cover; and a rear cover detachably coupled with the front cover; wherein the rear cover comprises the bracket-accommodating portion, the first coupling portion, and a sliding guide, a reinforcing cover detachably connected onto the rear cover, with the reinforcing cover is formed with a separation hole at a position corresponding to the first coupling portion of the rear cover, wherein the door handle structure allows easy disassembly of the handle structure for maintenance purpose. Therefore, it would have been obvious to modify the structure of Gose by providing the door handle with a front cover; and a rear cover detachably coupled with the front cover; wherein the rear cover comprises the bracket-accommodating portion, the first coupling portion, and a sliding guide, a reinforcing cover detachably connected onto the rear cover, with the reinforcing cover is formed

Art Unit: 3637

with a separation hole at a position corresponding to the first coupling portion of the rear cover, wherein the door handle structure allows easy disassembly of the handle structure for maintenance purpose, as taught by Oishi, since both teach alternate conventional door handle structure for a refrigerator, used for the same intended purpose, thereby providing structure as claimed.

Response to Arguments

9. Applicant's arguments filed 2/5/2007 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. In response to applicant's argument on page 7 that the element noted by the examiner as a sliding guide is simply a cutout formed in the door handle, the examiner takes the position that the claimed language fails to provide adequate structural limitations in defining applicant's sliding guide in order to distinguish from Oishi.

10. In response to applicant's argument on page 7 that Oishi fails to teach or suggest the door handle structure having a bracket-accommodation portion and a sliding guide, the examiner again takes the position that the claimed language fails to provide adequate structural limitations in defining applicant's bracket-accommodation and sliding guide in order to distinguish from Oishi.

11. In response to applicant's argument that Oishi fails to disclose the first coupling portion having a structure such that the door handle may slide in a direction parallel to a plane of the door, the examiner again takes the position that the claimed language fails to provide adequate structural limitations in defining the plane of the door in order to

Art Unit: 3637

distinguish from Oishi. More specifically, the claimed language recites the door having a plane without specify this plane, such that Oishi meets the claimed limitation of the first coupling portion being locked to the second coupling portion by sliding the first coupling portion in a direction parallel to the plane of the door, and as stated in the above art rejection, this plane is defined a the horizontal plane of the door.

Conclusion

12. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Hanh V. Tran whose telephone number is (571) 272-6868. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday, and alternate Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Lanna Mai can be reached on (571) 272-6867. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Art Unit: 3637

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.



HVT

March 19, 2007

Hanh V. Tran
Art Unit 3637